



Early Literacy Community Development Online Course

Updated 10/27/14

Course Description and Purpose

As part of the Growing Wisconsin Readers early literacy initiative, the Public Library Development Team (PLDT) at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is proud to announce a free, new professional development opportunity for Wisconsin public youth services librarians and their community partners taking place in spring 2015. The Early Literacy and Community Development (ELCD) course is designed to assist participants in the investigation, analysis, and assessment of the role of the local library in early literacy development within the context of the local community.

The ELCD course is facilitated by a professional instructor. Course participants will be selected through an [online](#) application process administered by PLDT. Applicants may apply as a team of three, a pair of two, OR as a single participant if a partner(s) cannot be identified. Pairs/teams must work in the same municipality/community. A maximum of 30 persons are assigned to each course session. The four week online course uses online tools, readings, exercises, and assignments to support teams through the process of examining the shared role of early literacy efforts within a community-specific framework. Coursework will involve weekly individual assignments to be completed asynchronously. An average student spends about three hours per week on the course, although participation varies.

Completion of the coursework will result in a location-specific asset map and action plan. Participants who complete the course will be eligible for a mini-grant to stimulate action plan objectives. Participants who complete the course will receive 1.4 CEUs/14 LEUs and a print certificate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Library and Information Studies Continuing Education Services (SLIS CES). CEU/LEUs can be applied toward Wisconsin Public Library Certification or Wisconsin Early Care Professional Development (The Registry). The ELCD course will be offered for a limited time and is not open to the general public. The ELCD course and materials are made possible through a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Course Instructor

The ELCD course instructor, Sharon Grover, has worked with children her entire professional career. Most recently, Ms. Grover has worked as the Head of Youth Services at the Hedberg Public Library in Janesville, Wisconsin. As an instructor, she has experience facilitating groups of practitioners using a variety of techniques. Ms. Grover has worked extensively with Wisconsin early childhood practitioners, centers, organizations, and public libraries in recent years as part of Rock County collaborative early literacy efforts.

Course Participants

Wisconsin communities that are currently experiencing difficult, limited, or minimized early childhood connections are encouraged to identify applicants. Applicants may apply as a team of three, a pair of two, OR as a single participant if a partner(s) cannot be identified. Pairs/teams must work in the same municipality/community. Applicants who apply as a pair or team of three must commit to participating in the course as a group. Participants must complete the course in order to be eligible for a mini-grant. Individual participation will determine completion; the course will be evaluated pass/fail.

For teams of three, at least one, but no more than two, team member(s) must represent the public library in roles such as youth services librarian, library director, library staff, or library board member (no MLS required). Non-library team members might include: Head Start director or education coordinator, child care director, school district librarian, school district four-year old kindergarten coordinator, elementary school principal, early childhood special education personnel, community literacy agency staff, child care resource and referral agency, UW Extension Agency, community action commission, United Way, or technical college faculty. An ideal team of three will include members who have combined experience working with children and families, making program and budget decisions, and networking with community members and organizations.

For pairs, at least one member must represent the public library in roles such as youth services librarian, library director, library staff, or library board member (no MLS required). The second member can be a library or non-library group member.

Single participants must represent the public library in roles such as youth services librarian, library director, library staff, or library board member (no MLS required).

Course Timeline

Participants will participate in a *single* four-week long course during spring 2015. Two sessions will be offered. The [online](#) team application closes on November 30, 2014. All applicants, regardless of acceptance or wait-list status, will be informed by December 15, 2014. Single/pairs/teams will be assigned to one of the following sessions:

Session A

Sunday, January 4, 2015-Saturday, January 31, 2015

Session B

Sunday, February 8, 2015-Saturday, March 7, 2015

Course Fee and Expectations

There is no fee to apply for the ELCD course. Participants selected for the course will have their course fees paid for through a grant from IMLS; there is no direct cost to participate. Participants are expected to engage with other participants and the course instructor throughout the four-week course. Participants may complete individual tasks asynchronously each week; however, pair/team members will be required to check in with each other several times throughout the course, either in person or by phone. Coursework will require use of online tools and completion of readings, exercises, and assignments.

If any participant drops out of the course after it begins, a \$30 registration fee will be assessed.

Course Mini-Grants

Mini-grants ranging from \$200-\$250 will be awarded to public libraries upon single/pair/team completion of the course. Mini-grants must be used to stimulate action plan objectives developed during the course; projects should benefit the community, not just the library. Mini-grant funds must be used within three months of completing the course. Funds will be distributed on a [reimbursement](#) basis; funds must be used according to LSTA guidelines for [allowable costs](#). Possible mini-grant projects might include:

- hosting a local early childhood community roundtable meeting
- establishing a new babies welcome kit program
- developing coordinated outreach programs and services
- providing transportation to family early literacy training

Course Coordination

The ELCD course is administered by the University of Wisconsin-Madison [School of Library and Information Studies Continuing Education Services](#). The ELCD course is a professional development component of the Growing Wisconsin Readers early literacy initiative coordinated by the [Youth and Special Services](#) consultant on the [Public Library and Development Team](#) at the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#). For more information about Growing Wisconsin Readers, visit GrowingWisconsinReaders.org or contact Tessa Michaelson Schmidt at tessa.schmidt@dpi.wi.gov.

